

# **SCDDSN Quality Management RISK MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

---

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to establish the initial structure of DDSN's Risk Management program, which is intended to eliminate, reduce, and/ or control exposure to risk, loss and injury. This document also establishes DDSN Risk Management Committees.

## **General**

The South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs recognizes that every organization, no matter how well run, its employees and its consumers of services inherently possess exposure to risk. It also recognizes that management of the risk factors that impact on the agency, its employees, and the consumers that it serves requires a broad-based, coordinated managerial approach in order to mitigate any harm or loss.

A broad- based agency Risk Management program should fulfill the following purposes: 1) improve the safety and quality of life for consumers and employees; 2) conserve financial resources; 3) prevent litigation; and 4) maintain relationships of trust among stakeholders.

## **DDSN Risk Management Program**

The Risk Management program of the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs shall include:

- Identification of a Risk Manager (RM) at each organizational unit;
- Establishment of Risk Management Committees (RMC) at each organizational unit;
- A written plan aimed at reducing risk to consumers and employees;
- Education and training;
- A system for collecting, analyzing, and acting on risk data;
- Correlating risk management activities with Quality Assurance activities.

## **DDSN Central Office Risk Management Committee**

The DDSN Central Office Risk Management Committee (CO RMC) will be co-chaired by the agency's Risk Manager and the Director, Division of Quality Management. Membership of the CO RMC will be drawn from central office, regional centers and representation from the DSN Boards. Other staff with special expertise (in medical, nursing, physical plant, etc.) may be asked to serve as resources to the CO RMC on an "as needed" basis.

In its regular meetings, the CO RMC will focus on areas that present the greatest amount of risk to people served by DDSN. Areas of initial focus will include: a) abuse, neglect and exploitation; b) critical incidents; c) medication errors and d) deaths. Other areas of review will be added in the future (e.g. use of physical restraints, accidents/ injuries, property damage that involves consumers, employees, etc).

The CO RMC will establish a formal system for reporting and reviewing risk incidents that occur in each of the above cited areas, analyze data for trends, identify problem areas, make recommendations for change/ improvement, and follow up on the implementation of these recommendations.

The analysis, problem identification, recommendations and feedback loop established by the CO RMC shall serve to augment, and not take the place of, the normal supervisory review and follow up that occurs in all good management practice.

The CO RMC will maintain a database in each area of special risk concern.

Upon the identification of emerging risk trends, the CO RMC shall recommend changes in practices, policies, and training that are designed to mitigate these risks in the future.

The CO RMC will maintain contact with other areas within and outside of DDSN that may play a part in identifying trends and implementing solutions (e.g. safety/ abuse coordinators, workers compensation staff, training coordinators, mechanisms for investigation/ fact finding, etc.)

The CO RMC will make regular reports to DDSN senior staff as to the frequency, severity, loss, and remedial actions taken regarding risk factors.

### **Regional Center Risk Management Committees**

Each regional center will designate a person as the center's Risk Manager (RM), and will establish a Regional Center Risk Management Committee (RC RMC). This important function may be fulfilled by already existing Regional Center health and/or safety committees, if the committee membership is broad enough. The RC RMC may address a wider range of health and safety issues than are being considered by the CO RMC. The RM & RC RMC will carry out the same functions at the regional centers that are performed by the CO RMC for DDSN system- wide. Each regional center's RM is a member of the CO RMC.

The RC RMC shall meet on a regular basis to review data on risk events that have occurred at each respective regional center, analyze these for trends, make recommendations for corrective action, and follow up on actions taken.

The regional center's RM will be responsible for ensuring that reports and data requested by the CO RMC within the areas of special risk concern are forwarded to the CO RMC in a timely fashion.

The CO RMC will maintain contact with each RC RMC through the regional center's RM, who is also a member of the CO RMC, in order to receive data/ reports, communicate identified trends, inform of recommended actions, and receive back reports on corrective actions taken.

### **DSN Board Risk Manager &/ or Committee**

Each DSN Board or other contracting agency that receives funds from the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs will designate a person as the Agency's Risk

Manager (ARM). The larger DSN Boards and community agencies will also establish an Agency Risk Management Committee (A RMC) to assist the ARM. If the board or community agency already has an existing Safety Committee in operation, they may use this same committee to fulfill the risk management oversight function, if the committee membership is broad enough. The ARM and A RMC will carry out the same functions on the DSN board level that are performed by the CO RMC for DDSN system- wide and the RC RMC at each regional center.

The ARM will be responsible for forwarding to the CO RMC all necessary data and reports within the areas of special risk concern that are being monitored.

The CO RMC will maintain contact with the ARM and A RMC in order to receive data/ reports, communicate regarding trends that appear to be occurring system- wide, make recommendations, and be available for technical assistance.

### **Tools of Risk Management**

In order for an agency's Risk Management Program to be effective, the following "tools" need to be available.

- **INFORMATION-** knowledge, expertise, & commitment of employees; sound policies and procedures; risk incident reporting systems; computerized databases; correction and feedback loops.
- **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORTS-** agency organization; well-developed infrastructure; committees of reference; systems of communication, decision making, & follow up; agency mission, vision, and values.
- **TRAINING PROGRAMS-** pre-service training; in-service training; specialty training in consumer rights, behavioral support planning, critical incident reporting, medication administration, driver safety, etc.
- **QUALITY ASSURANCE/ IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS-** consumer satisfaction; personal outcomes; continuous quality improvement; etc.